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LETTER DATED 19 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 19 November 1997 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the violation of Iraq's airspace by the United States U-2 spy plane on 18 November 1997 pursuant to a decision by the United States Administration.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 19 November 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

At a time when intensive diplomatic and political efforts are being made to find a solution to the crisis contrived by the United States of America - which persists in beating the war drums, in reinforcing its military concentrations and in threatening to engage in brutal military aggression against the people of Iraq - and despite our numerous letters addressed to you concerning the espionage-related character of the United States U-2 aircraft, the most recent of which was that of 10 November 1997 (S/1997/867, annex), the United States spy plane in question violated our airspace, pursuant to a decision by the United States Administration, at 1125 hours Baghdad time on 18 November 1997. In so doing it once again violated, by military threat, the sovereignty of an independent State and a founding member of the United Nations. On this basis, it is not, even nominally or formally, one of the means used by the United Nations for monitoring purposes.

I should like to state once more that we shall act in its regard, and in regard to other United States aircraft that violate our airspace in this manner, in such a way as to safeguard Iraq's sovereignty and security.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs of
the Republic of Iraq